DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 117 UD 035 189

AUTHOR Mei, Lori; Bell-Ellwanger, Jennifer; Miller, Ron

TITLE An Examination of 4-Year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates for the New York City Public Schools' Class of 2001 and Final School Completion Outcomes for the Class of 1998.

PUB DATE 2002-04-00

NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 1-5, 2002).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Dropout Rate; Dropouts; Educational Change; *Graduation Rate; High Schools; Longitudinal Studies; Urban Youth

IDENTIFIERS New York (New York); *New York City Board of Education

ABSTRACT

This study examined the progress of students in New York City who entered the ninth grade in fall 1997 and were scheduled to graduate in spring 2001 after 4 years of high school. This report indicates the percentages of students in this class, the Class of 2001, who graduated, dropped out, and were still enrolled in school to attend a fifth year of high school in fall 2001. Longitudinal analyses of graduation and dropout rates are presented in the context of higher standards for grade promotion instituted by the Board of Education of New York City in 1999 and the higher standards for high school graduation being phased in by the New York State Board of Regents. Among the key findings are: (1) the 4-year cohort dropout rate increased for the third consecutive class to 20.4% for the Class of 2001, up 2.9 percentage points from the Class of 1999 and 1.1 percentage points from the Class of 2000; and (2) at the same time, the 4-year graduation rate for the Class of 2001 was 51.0%, 1.1 percentage points higher than the Class of 2000, and the highest on-time graduation rate since 1991. Several alternative hypotheses for the increases both in cohort graduation and dropout rates are explored, with the conclusion that the increase in the 4-year graduation rate is the result of several years of systemic high school reform and the increase in the dropout rate is primarily the result of intensified followup of absent students who are ultimately determined to be dropouts. (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 467 117

Running head: NYC GRADUATION and DROPOUT RATES

An Examination of 4-Year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates for The New York City Public Schools' Class of 2001 and Final School Completion Outcomes for The Class of 1998

Lori Mei, Ph.D. Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, and Ron Miller, Ph.D.
Board of Education of the City of New York

UD 035 189

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L. Mei

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

New York City has longitudinally tracked students' progress toward school completion for over a decade. This study examines the progress of students who entered the ninth grade in fall 1997 and were scheduled to graduate in spring 2001 after four years of high school. Designated as the Class of 2001, this report indicates the percentages of students who graduated, dropped out, and were still enrolled in school to attend a fifth year of high school in fall 2001. Longitudinal analyses of graduation and dropout rates are presented within the context of higher standards for grade promotion instituted by the Board of Education of the City of New York in 1999 and higher standards for high school graduation being phased in by the New York State Board of Regents.

Among the key findings are the following:

- The four-year cohort dropout rate increased for the third consecutive class to 20.4 percent for the Class of 2001, up 2.9 percentage points from the Class of 1999 and 1.1 percentage points from the Class of 2000.

- At the same time, the four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2001 was 51.0 percent, 1.1 percentage points higher than the Class of 2000 and the highest on-time graduation rate since 1991.

Several alternative hypotheses for the increases in both cohort graduation and dropout rates are explored in this study which concludes that the increase in the four-year graduation rate is the result of several years of systemic high school reform and the increase in dropout rate is primarily due to intensified follow-up of absent students who are ultimately determined to the dropouts.

OBJECTIVE OR PURPOSE

New York City has longitudinally tracked students' progress toward school completion for over a decade. This study examines the progress of students who entered the ninth grade in fall 1997 and were scheduled to graduate in spring 2001 after four years of high school. Designated as the Class of 2001, the report indicates the percentages of students who graduated, dropped out, and were still enrolled in school to attend a fifth year of high school in fall 2001. Additional information about this class is available in the Class of 2001 Four-Year Longitudinal Report and 2000 – 2001 Event Dropout Rates (www.nycenet.edu/daa/) under "Studies and Reports."

Earlier longitudinal studies of New York City high school students, as well as national longitudinal studies, have shown that many students remain in high school beyond the traditional four years and graduate at the end of five, six, or even seven years of high school. Therefore, to assess the final outcomes of each class, each cohort is studied for an additional three years. This study also examines final graduation and dropout rates for the Class of 1998 (i.e., final school completion outcomes as of June, 2001 for the cohort that would have been expected to graduate in four years at the end of 1998). More complete information about this class is available in the "Class of 1998 Final Longitudinal Report-A Three-Year Follow-Up Study." (www.nycenet.edu/daa under "Studies and Reports.")

Longitudinal analyses of graduation and dropout rates are presented within the context of higher standards for grade promotion instituted by the Board of Education of the City of New York in 1999 and higher standards for high school graduation being phased in by the New York State Board of Regents. Figure 1 summarizes the phase-in of commencement examinations for students entering high school in New York State during the last several years (www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/opener.html). As indicated in this figure, students who entered grade 9 this past fall (September 2001) are required to pass Regents examinations in five subject areas (English, Mathematics, Global History, U.S. History and Government, and Science) with a score of at least 65 and meet a language requirement in order to graduate.

The impact that the higher graduation standards imposed by the New York State Education Department has upon the 4-year graduation rate has occurred at the same time as the debate about the appropriateness of the GED as a measure of high school completion has intensified. A recent study by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research (Greene, 2001) concluded that students who receive a GED do not possess skills equivalent to those of students who achieve a high school diploma and, thus should not be counted as graduates. Several recent newspapers articles have discussed the pros as well as the limitations of a GED as an indicator of students' future success. Wetzstein (2001) reports that a policy analyst at the National Education Association views Greene's study as "flawed" partly because he did not count GED numbers. "America is the land of second chances, and young people who came to

Figure 1

Phase In of New State Assessment System By Class

	Class of 2000 Grade 9: Fall 96	Class of 2001 Grade 9: Fall 97	Class of 2002 Grade 9: Fall 98	Class of 2003 Grade 9: Fall 99	Class of 2004 Grade 9: Fall 2000	Class of 2005 Grade 9: Fall 2001
1998-1999	11 ELA Regents (55)	10 Math Regents (55)	9	8 ELA 8 Math 8	7	6
1999-2000	12	11 ELA Regents (55)	10 Math Regents (55) Global Studies Regents (55)	9	8 ELA 8 Math 8	7
2000-2001		12	11 ELA Regents (55) US History & Government Regents (55)	10 Math Regents (55) Global Studies Regents (55) Science Regents (55)	9	8 ELA 8 Math 8 Social Studies 8 Science 8 [Technology 7 or 8]
2001-2002			12	11 ELA Regents (55) US History & Government Regents (55)	10 Math Regents (55) Global Studies Regents (65) Science Regents (55)	9
2002-2003					11 ELA Regents (65) US History & Government Regents (65)	10 Math Regents (65) Global Studies Regents (65) Science Regents (65)
2003-2004						11 ELA Regents (65) US History & Government Regents (65)

their senses and finish their high school education [with GED] should receive recognition for that accomplishment" (Greene). The intent of the paper is to evaluate the impact that raising graduation standards has had upon NYC's graduation rate and to discuss the impact that including students who receive GEDs as graduates has upon the findings'.

METHODS TECHNIQUES OR MODES OF INQUIRY

The cohort described in this report is comprised of students in general education classes as well as special education students in general education classes receiving resource room, related services, consultant teacher services, and integrated programs. Students were assigned to the Class of 2001 cohort based on the year in which they entered grades 9 through 12. More than 90 percent of the students in the Class of 2001 joined the cohort as entering ninth-graders during the 1997-98 school year and most had been in the New York City public schools in lower grades. Some entered the school system during grade 9. The remainder transferred into the New York City public schools during high school and became part of the cohort as tenth graders in 1998-99, as eleventh graders in 1999-00, or as twelfth graders in 2000-01. All of these students would have completed the traditional four-year high school sequence by spring or summer 2001. Students who were discharged to other school systems with confirmation of enrollment were omitted from the cohort.

Research Questions

Several hypotheses were examined to explain the increases in cohort graduation and dropout rates reported for New York City public school students:

1. Is the higher graduation rate a result of more students earning a GED since GEDs are included as graduates in this methodology?

2. Are more students leaving the cohort (e.g. moving outside of NYC) to avoid the more rigorous Regents graduation requirements?

3. Are more students dropping out when they cannot meet the more rigorous Regents graduation requirements?

DATA SOURCES OR EVIDENCE

Definition of Outcomes

The primary focus of this report is on the number and percent of students graduating on time and dropping out of the New York City public schools. Related to this focus is the task of determining the status of all of the students in the class at the time the students were expected to graduate. Each student in the study group is

determined to be in one of four possible categories based on his or her status at the end of the school year using BOE extant data sources.

- *Dropouts*: These are students who have left the school system without enrolling in another education program that leads either to a high school diploma or prepares the student for the Test of General Educational Development leading to a general equivalency diploma (GED).

  Students are identified as dropouts during the school year if, after a period of non-attendance (generally, at least one month) and subsequent search by the Bureau of Attendance, the student does not return to school. According to State Education Department regulations, students who turn 17 during the school year must be maintained on register until the end of the school year, at which time the student can be discharged as a dropout.

- *Graduates and Other School Completers:* These are students who have received a high school diploma, GED, or special education certificate by August 2001. Graduates are identified by the type of diploma received: local high school diploma, Regents-Endorsed diploma, Regents-Endorsed diploma with Honors, special education diploma, or special education certificate.

- *Discharges, Transfers, and Students Leaving the School System:* These are students who left the school system primarily to enroll in another educational program or setting. This includes students who enrolled in a local private or parochial school, enrolled in a school outside of New York City, or entered a non-Board of Education GED preparation program. Students, who aged out of the school system, i.e. reached the age of 21, and students who died prior to completing high school, are also counted in this category. Students in this category are identified as "discharged" to avoid confusion with high school transfer within the New York City public schools.

  Students may be discharged from the school system only after a request for the student's records (or other official documentation) has been received or there is a confirmed admission to the new educational setting.

  Students who are discharged from the school system no longer attend the New York City public schools. As such, it is inappropriate to hold schools accountable for these students, and they are not included in the final statistics for the study group. The National Center for Education Statistics has conducted national studies of discharged students to estimate their school completion status. These studies have indicated that discharged students graduate and drop out at rates similar to those for students who remain in a given school system. In fact, these studies have suggested that the graduation rates of discharged students may even be higher.

- *Students Still Enrolled in the School System:* These are students who were still on register and scheduled to continue into a fifth year of high school in fall 2001.

RESULTS/CONCLUSIONS/POINTS OF VIEW

Four-Year Cohort Results

Table 1 presents school completion outcomes for the Classes of 1991 through 2001. As indicated in this table, the four-year dropout rate increased for the third consecutive class to 20.4 percent for the Class of 2001, up 2.9 percentage points from the Class of 1999 and 1.1 percentage points from the Class of 2000. In fact, the dropout rate for the Class of 2001 is comparable to the four-year rate reported for the Class of 1991. Similarly, the graduation rate of 51.0 percent for the Class of 2001 is identical to that of the Class of 1991. It should be noted however, that the actual number of students graduating is higher for the Class of 2001 than for the Class of 1991 because of the increase in the number of students in the cohort (Class of 1991=59,228; Class of 2001 = 65,727). This increase in the number of students graduating holds true even when students who receive a GED are removed from graduation statistics, as shown in Table 2. Moreover, GED recipients account for only a small percentage of graduates in the Classes of 1998 through 2001 (3.8 percent in 1998; 4.1 percent in 1999; 4.3 percent in 2000; 4.1 percent in 2001). However, in the 7-year follow-up studies of the Classes of 1996, 1997, and 1998, the percent of GED recipients among graduates nearly doubles, accounting for almost 15 percent of the graduates in these classes (Table 3).

In fact, the increase in the percentage of students graduating in four years is the result of several years of systemic reform at the high school level including the development and implementation of programs designed to meet the literacy and mathematical needs of incoming high school students and the design of smaller high school learning environments. Significant numbers of these students enter high school overage for their grade (26.4 percent) and without having met grade-level standards on 8th grade English language arts (66.1 percent) and mathematics (76.8 percent) tests.

The increase in the dropout rate, while of great concern, should be examined within the context of the final school completion outcomes reported below. It may be that the Chancellor's attendance initiative, with its intensive follows up on students who are absent from school, has resulted in an increase in the four-year dropout rate as absent students who are not found are removed from the register, often as dropouts.

TABLE 1

New York City Public Schools
Comparison of Four-Year Cohort For
the Classes of 1991 to 2001

	Percent of Students Identified as:			
Class of:	*Dropouts*	*Graduates*	*Still-Enrolled*	*Total N*
1991	20.5	51.0	28.5	59,228
1992	19.1	50.7	30.2	60,161
1993	18.4	49.7	31.9	61,359
1994	18.3	50.7	31.0	63,159
1995	18.1	48.2	33.7	65,254
1996	16.4	48.3	35.3	66,536
1997	15.9	48.4	35.7	66,703
1998	15.6	49.7	34.6	63,803
1999	17.5	50.1	32.4	65,748
2000	19.3	49.9	30.8	67,072
2001	20.4	51.0	28.6	65,727

Note: Students who were discharged from the school system are not included in the above results. Data include August graduates and students who received a GED.

Table 2

4-Year Cohort School Completion Status

	Class of 1998	Class of 1999	Class of 2000	Class of 2001
GED Recipients	3.8%	4.1%	4.3%	4.1%
Graduates (excluding GED recipients)	45.9%	46.0%	45.7%	46.9%
Total % Graduates & GED Recipients	49.7%	50.1%	49.9%	51.0%
Dropouts	15.6%	17.5%	19.3%	20.4%
Students Still Enrolled as of June	34.7%	32.4%	30.8%	28.6%
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total N	63,803	65,748	67,072	65,727

Table 3
Types of Diplomas Earned by
Cohort Graduates After
4 and 7 Years

	Class of 1996		*Class of 1997*		*Class of 1998*	
Diploma Type	**After 4 years**	**After 7 Years**	**After 4 years**	**After 7 Years**	**After 4 years**	**After 7 Years**
Local High School Diplomas	68.4%	67.7%	69.0%	67.2%	66.3%	65.0%
Regents Endorsed Diplomas Including with Honors	22.3%	16.9%	23.6%	17.9%	25.8%	19.8%
GED	9.3%	15.5%	7.5%	14.9%	7.9%	15.1%
Total N	32,130	44,675	32,451	44,675	31,418	41,912

Note: The year of the class indicates the expected year of graduation after 4 years of high school. Classes are followed for an additional 3 years until students age out of public education at 21 years old.

Final School Completion Outcomes

Final school completion outcomes for the Classes of 1986 through 1998 are presented in Table 4. Because many students remain in high school beyond four years, the school completion outcomes of each cohort are examined twice, once at the end of four years and again at the end of three additional years of high school. Thus, the final outcomes for the Class of 1998 were determined in June, 2001; three years after students in this cohort would have been expected to graduate if they progressed at the traditional rate.

As indicated in Table 4, the final school completion outcomes of students has not changed appreciably for the last four classes studied (Classes of 1995-1998). Approximately 7 out of 10 students in each of these classes either graduated with a diploma or a GED and approximately 3 out of 10 students dropped out. Final dropout rates of New York City public school students are compared with those reported for students in the Chicago Public Schools, another urban school system, undergoing a shift to higher standards in Figure 2. As shown in this figure, the dropout of both girls and boys were higher in the Chicago cohorts than among New York City students, even when students receiving GEDs were removed from New York City's graduation rates, and added to dropout rates to ensure comparability of methodology between two school systems (Allensworth and Easton, 2001).

Notwithstanding comparisons to Chicago, the number of students who leave NYC public schools without graduating remains high, and is being addressed through several innovative initiatives. However, if higher standards were causing even greater numbers of students to drop out, then we would expect to see an increase in the dropout rates reported in the final school completion outcomes, an increase that has not, as yet, occurred.

Alternative Explanations for School Completion Outcomes

A variety of factors may account for the school completion outcomes reported in Tables 1 and 2. Several hypotheses are considered here.

Hypothesis #1: Is the Higher Graduation Rate a Result of an Increase in the Number of Students Earning A GED?

Table 5 summarizes the types of diplomas earned in four years by students in the Class of 2001 and Class of 2000. It was hypothesized that the increase in four-year graduation rate of students in the Class of 2001 might be explained by an increase in the percentage of the class receiving GEDs, especially if students were having difficulty achieving the higher graduation standards put in place by the State Board of Regents. The data summarized in Table 5 refutes this hypothesis. As shown in this table, a lower percentage of GEDs were received by the Class of 2001 as compared to the percent received by the Class of 2000—8.1 percent versus 8.5 percent. In fact, the percentage

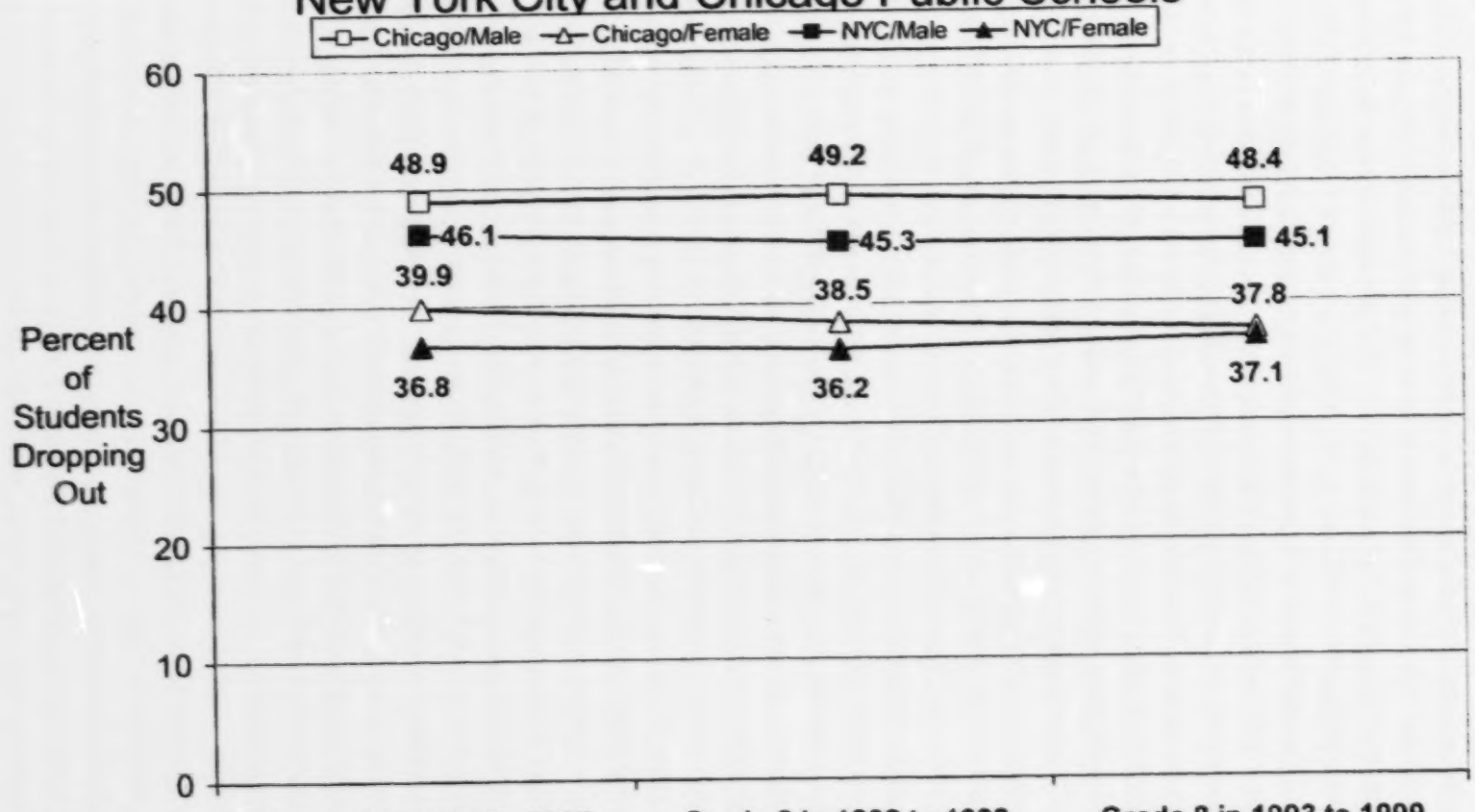
TABLE 4

New York City Public Schools
Final Cohort Results for the Classes of 1986 Through 1998
(After 7 Years)

	Percent of Students Identified as:		
Class of:	*Dropouts*	*Graduates*	*Total N*
1986	33.1	66.9	61,190
1987	34.1	65.9	70,634
1988	32.4	67.6	70,329
1989	33.3	66.7	70,947
1990	32.9	67.1	65,201
1991	N/A	N/A	N/A
1992	30.3	69.7	60,144
1993	29.1	70.9	59,741
1994	29.3	70.7	61,416
1995	30.0	70.0	63,180
1996	30.6	69.4	64,394
1997	30.3	69.7	64,127
1998	30.5	69.5	60,479

Note: Final cohort results were not completed in 1991.

Comparison of Cohort Dropout Rates by Gender
New York City and Chicago Public Schools



	Grade 8 in 1991 to 1997	Grade 8 in 1992 to 1998	Grade 8 in 1993 to 1999
Chicago Public Schools	Class of 1996	Class of 1997	Class of 1998
NYC Public Schools	Final Outcomes	Final Outcomes	Final Outcomes

Note: Each cohort in the Chicago public schools is followed for 6 years from age 13 to age 19. Comparable cohorts in NYC public schools are followed for 7 years from the time the students are first-time 9th graders until they are 21 years old.

Note: The methodology used by the Chicago public schools counts GEDs as dropouts. New York City's methodology includes GEDs as graduates. The statistics presented here have been recalculated to conform with Chicago's methodology.

Sources: Calculating a Cohort Dropout Rate for the Chicago Public Schools: A Technical Research Report, June 2001; NYC BOE Class of 1996, 1997 and 1998 Final Longitudinal Reports: Three-Year Follow-Up Studies.

TABLE 5

New York City Public Schools
Types of Diplomas Earned by Graduates in
the Classes of 2001 and 2000

	Class of 2001		Class of 2000	
Diploma Type	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
High School Local Diploma	20,066	59.9	20,435	61.0
Regents-Endorsed Diploma	8,607	25.7	8,025	24.0
Regents-Endorsed Diplomas with Honors	1,982	5.9	2,011	6.0
Special Education Diploma or Certificate*	160	0.5	162	0.5
GED	2,705	8.1	2,854	8.5
Total Graduates	33,520	100.1	33,487	100.0

*These students were in General Education classes with special education services.

of the Class of 2001 earning a Regents-Endorsed Diploma or a Regents-Endorsed Diploma with Honors was higher for the Class of 2001 (31.6 percent) than for the previous class (30 percent). This trend supports the contention that increases in the percentage of students graduating at the end of four years are the result of high school reform efforts and are, in fact, attributable to more students graduating having achieved the more rigorous Regents requirements rather than the less rigorous GED requirements.

Hypothesis #2: Are More Students Leaving the Cohort (e.g., Moving Outside of NYC) to Avoid the More Rigorous Regents Graduation Requirements?

Table 6 summarizes the types of discharges out of the system that occurred for students in the last two classes studied. If students were intentionally leaving the NYC public schools because they believed that they could not meet the higher standards for a high school diploma, then there should be more students discharged from the Class of 2001 as "removal from NYC." Table 6 shows that this was not the case. There is no appreciable difference in the types of discharges out of the system recorded for the Classes of 2001 and of 2000. As in previous classes, the overwhelming reason for students leaving the cohort was because they left NYC. However, students in the Class of 2001 did not leave at a higher rate than their peers in the previous class did.

Hypothesis #3: Are More Students Dropping Out Because They Cannot Meet the More Rigorous Regents Graduation Requirements?

The final hypothesis considered was whether students in the Class of 2001 were dropping out at a higher rate than previous classes because they could not meet the more rigorous Regents graduation requirements. Several analyses considered this hypothesis and was ultimately found not to be clearly supported by the data although the findings suggest that some trends may be developing but watching. Table 7 examines the types of dropouts in the Class of 2001 and the Class of 2000. In both classes, over 90 percent of the students who dropped out were discharged as "over 17 years old." This finding indicates that the overwhelming majority of dropouts are students who are not succeeding in high school and drop out after their 17th birthday.

Table 8, disaggregates students, discharged as dropouts from the Classes of 2001 and 2000 by the grade in which they dropped out. As indicated here, 77.2 percent of the dropouts from the Class of 2001 dropped out as either 9th (37.1 percent) or 10th (40.1 percent) graders. Similarly, 66.4 percent of the dropouts from the Class of 2000 also dropped out in the 9th (32.5 percent) or 10th (33.9 percent) grades.

Taken together, these findings suggest that students drop out when they repeatedly fail their classes and consequently do not earn enough credits to be promoted to the next grade. If they are unable to master the content of high school classes, they are unable to take and pass the examinations in these content areas that are required to graduate.

TABLE 6

New York City Public Schools
Types of Discharges Out of the System
for Students in the Classes of 2001 and 2000

	Class of 2001		Class of 2000	
Types of Discharge	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
Removal from NYC	10,037	71.2	9,950	71.1
Enrolled in a GED Program Outside of NYC	1,279	9.1	1,257	9.0
Enrolled in a Non-BOE GED Program In NYC	751	5.3	685	4.9
Institutionalized	767	5.4	670	4.8
Other Discharges	1,267	9.0	1,428	10.2
Totals	14,101	100.0	13,990	100.0

Note: Students discharged with these codes are removed from the cohort.

TABLE 7

New York City Public Schools
Comparison of the Types of Dropouts
In the Classes of 2001 and 2000

	Class of 2001		Class of 2000	
Types of Dropout	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
Over 17 years old	12,392	92.5	11,676	90.2
Address Unknown	282	2.1	242	1.9
Full-time Employment Certificate	317	2.4	289	2.2
Other Dropouts	401	3.0	744	5.7
Totals	13,392	100.0	12,951	100.0

TABLE 8

New York City Public Schools
Distribution of the Grade Level in Which Students Drop Out
Classes of 2001 and 2000

Grade in which Students Dropped out	Class of 2001		Class of 2000	
	N	%	N	%
Grade 9	4,968	37.1	4,209	32.5
Grade 10	5,370	40.1	4,390	33.9
Grade 11	1,125	8.4	1,049	8.1
Grade 12	442	3.3	376	2.9
Ungraded Special Education	683	5.1	868	6.7
From a GED Program	790	5.9	2,033	15.7
Totals	13,378	99.9	12,925	99.8

Note: A total of 14 students in the Class of 2001 and 26 students in the Class of 2000 were missing grade information.

If the higher standards imposed by the Regents were causing students to drop out of high school in significant numbers, we would expect to see a shift in the characteristics of the students dropping out. That is, we would expect to see more students dropping out in the 10th grade since, in New York City, students are not promoted to the 11th grade unless they have met course requirements and are prepared to take the new, more difficult Regents examination. In fact 40.1 percent of the Class of 2001 dropped out in the 10th grade as compared with 33.9 percent of the Class of 2000. This trend suggest a slight shift in the grade distribution of dropouts, however, it should be examined within the context of the programs from which students are dropping out. Over 15 percent of the Class of 2000 but only about 6 percent of the Class of 2001 dropped out of GED programs. This finding, coupled with the previously reported finding that fewer students in the Class of 2001 met graduation requirements by receiving a GED, supports the contention that students in the Class of 2001 are being better prepared and, as a result, more students are graduating on time with Regents-Endorsed diplomas.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the cohort dropout rate has increased, the cohort graduation rate has increased as well. The decline in the graduation rate that many predicted[1] was not borne out for the Class of 2001. In fact, ample evidence indicates that several years of systemic reform in New York City high schools has resulted in more students earning Regents-Endorsed diplomas in four years. The increase in the dropout rate is thought to be primarily the result of intensified follow-up of absent students with the consequence that students who are truly dropouts are identified sooner. The fact that final dropout rates reported for classes tracked for seven years have not increased is offered as evidence for this hypothesis. However, shifts in the grade distribution of students discharged as dropouts will be scrutinized in future cohorts to determine whether the increase in the percentage of students dropping out in the 10th grades is indicative of a trend or is a consequence of fewer students dropping out of GED programs. While the debate about the appropriateness of the GED as an indicator academic success continues the fact remains that several thousand NYC public school students left with a GED, a credential that affords them greater options for post-secondary education than does the dropout label.

[1] Flash Research Report #5, "An Examination of the Relationship Between Higher Standards and Students Dropping Out," March 1, 2001 suggested that the four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2001 might decline if significant numbers of students in the Class of 2001 failed to pass the Regents Mathematics exam. This failure rate did not materialize.

References

Allensworth, E. and Easton, J.Q. (2001). *Calculating a cohort dropout rate for the Chicago public schools.* Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Class of 2001 Four-year longitudinal report and 2000-2001 event dropout rates. (2002). Retrieved March, 2002 from the Board of Education of the City of New York web site: http://www.nycenet.edu/daa/reports/index.html.

Class of 1998 Final longitudinal report: A three-year follow-up study. (2002). Retrieved March, 2002 from the Board of Education of the City of New York web site: http:// www.nycenet.edu/daa/reports/index.html.

Greene, J.P. (2001) *High school graduation rates in the United States.* Center for Civic Innovation at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

Wetzstein, C. (2001, November 14). Study: Graduation rates "implausibly high." [Electronic Version]. *The Washington Times.*

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

ED 035 189

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: An Examination of 4-year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates for the New York City Public Schools' Class of 2001 and Final School completion Outcomes for the Class of 1998	
Author(s): Lori Mei, Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, Ron Mickee	
Corporate Source: Board of Education of the City of New York	Publication Date: April 2, 2002

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☒

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Lori Mei	Printed Name/Position/Title: Lori Mei Executive Director
Organization/Address: Accountability Division of Assessment and 110 Livingston St., Room 728 Brooklyn, NY 11201	Telephone: 718 935-3767 FAX: 718 935-5265
	E-Mail Address: lmei@nycboe.net Date: 9/2/02

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
1129 SHRIVER LAB
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742-5701
ATTN: ACQUISITIONS

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to: